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Organization of Work

By

LOUIS BLANC

Translated from the *First Edition* by

MARIE PAULA DICKORÉ, A. M.

Sometime D.A.R. Fellow in American History
University of Cincinnati

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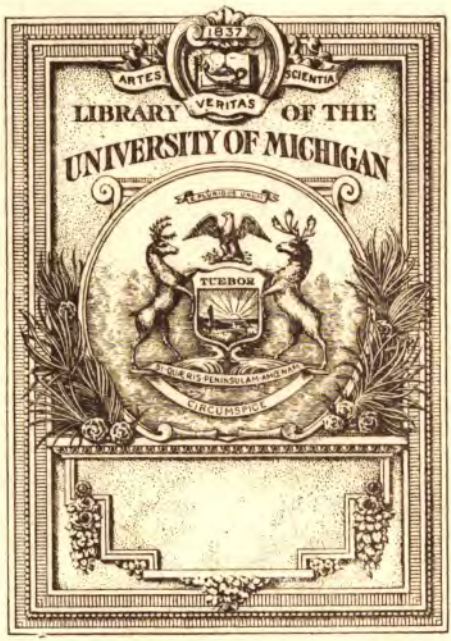
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To
Merrick Whitcomb, Ph. D.

Organisation du travail

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The author of this interesting little book, Jean Joseph Charles *Louis Blanc,* was born far from the scene of his life work in Madrid, October 29, 1811.[1] His father, Jean Charles, had suffered by the Reign of Terror and fled to Spain where he served as General Inspector of Finance under Joseph Bonaparte. He had married Estella Pozzo di Borgo and their two children were Jean and Charles. Soon after the family returned to France during the Restoration, their circumstances became so straightened that Louis was thrown upon the world to earn his own way.

The pittance received from private lessons and clerking in an attorney's office was not sufficient so Blanc accepted, in 1832, a position as tutor in Arras in the family of a manufacturer, Halette, who employed more than 300 workmen.[2] Here Blanc not only attended to his profession but made observations which sowed the seed for his future career. He talked with the workmen and studied their life and conditions; he endeavored to teach them and saw with pleasure how eager they were to educate themselves. Thus he had the opportunity of studying at close range conditions which heretofore had been strange to him and which now formulated in his mind the sketch for the interpretation of life which he later enlarged upon and made such great use of in his famous work.[3].

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1. Various dates are given but I have accepted October 29, 1811, on the authority of "Le Grande." Warshauer has October 28, while among others Daniel Sterne (Madame d'Agoult) *Histoire de la Revolution* and Quack, *De Socialisten,* make a mistake of two years, giving 1813 as the year of Blanc's birth Golliet gives still another, 1812.

2. Warshauer, Otto—*Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Socialismus,* part III, pp. 237, Louis Blanc, Berlin 1903.

3. Golliet, (*Louis Blanc, sa doctrine—son action, Paris 1903.*) claims that the difficulties which Blanc experienced before he went to Arras turned his thoughts to reflections on and criticisms of the social organization; also that Flaugergues, a friend and compatriot of the Blanc family told Louis about his experiences in the world of politics and thus laid the foundation of the ideas later developed by Blanc.

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Arras was not only the birthplace of his socialistic, but also of his journalistic career for two of his poems, "Sur Mirabeau" and "Eloge de Manuel," were awarded prizes by the Arras academy and local newspapers published other bits from his pen. In 1834 he returned to Paris, wrote for various papers and finally in 1837 became the editor of the "Bon Sens." The impressions received in Arras first came to light in this "Bon Sens." He pointed out the evil effect of free competition on the working classes and went even so far as to devote a portion of his paper to all working men's news. However this happy labor was not to exist long. Blanc disagreed with the publishers because they were not in harmony with his ideas and the final break came when he demanded that the building of railroads be conducted by the state and not by private corporations.

This break, however, did not crush his dauntless spirit. In 1839 he founded the *Revue du Progrès, politique et litteraire,* a magazine appearing every month and in which he could give his ideas free scope. He pointed out the corruption of the bourgeoisie in France; violently attacked the rights of the nobility; warmly recommended the introduction of equal suffrage and made a plea for the proletarian and his material wellfare.[4] The best product of this journalistic freedom was the series of articles, appearing in 1839 which, receiving so much applause throughout France, were published in pamphlet form, September, 1840.[5] Of this valuable article nine editions have appeared altogether, the last dated April 15, 1850.

Although Blanc proved himself a writer of no mean ability in his later productions, *(Histoire de dix ans, Histoire de la Révolution francaise*), this *Organization du Travail* is a little masterpiece showing the author to be a clear thinker, a fine idealist, possessed of a versatile, brilliant style with which to clothe his arguments and illustrate them by animated depictions of poverty and destitution. He set forth[6] the evils inherent in the

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4. Warshauer; pp. 239.

5. Many writers have said that the pamphlet was published in 1841 but my copy of the first edition is dated September, 1840.

6. Warschauer—The fundamental principle of the *Organization du Travail* is: all free competition must be destroyed because it does not combine harmoniously but disseminates the activities of each individual; being for the masses an unbearable condition of suffering and being also the cause of the antagonism which necessarily must exist between all producers and all consumers.

Blanc was certain that through free competition individual interest grows into a rapacious craving and that in the pursuit of

social conditions and the sufferings of the laboring class, due to insufficient wages, in order to demonstrate that a strict regulation of labor is necessary; for he held that individualism and free competition will ruin both the laboring class and the bourgeoisie. To this end he advocated the idea that the government should own the greater industries and establish national workshops in which each man would receive according to his needs and contribute according to his abilities. The state would then, through self-production cripple all other competitors and finally become the only maintenance of society. Blanc was a defender of the right of existence and an opponent of any income without work—especially of interest on capital.

The little book created such a stir among the laboring classes that the organization of work became the problem to be solved by the February Revolution, 1848, and as Blanc was a member of the Provisional Government, also president of the commission for the discussion of the labor problem,[7] it was decided to give his plan a trial and National Workshops were established Feb. 27, 1848. However, so many applied for work in these "ateliers" that each one could work only about every fourth day though receiving pay. Thousands of unemployed stormed Paris in search of this Eldorado so that a halt had to be called on the great wave of immigration of undesirable population by means of unfair decrees with the result that Blanc did not see his plans accomplished owing to mismanagement by those in charge and harsh measures in reducing the number of applicants. As these *ateliers* were purposely not planned and equipped at the start according to Blanc's theories, they were a failure and brought about the June insurrection and caused Blanc's flight to England. His scheme was not practicable in his day, for he was, like many another genius, far ahead of his time; he understood the ills of society and saw a fit remedy of which however, years of patient application would be necessary in order to overcome the deep-rooted evils.

Thus we see that Louis Blanc was the founder of this national workshop theory but not the active leader in the revolu-

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wealth he who amasses riches strides victoriously over the ruins of others and builds up his own fortune out of the shattered fragments.

7. Much for the betterment of the working classes was really accomplished by this commission; a ten hour day in Paris and an eleven hour day in the provinces; abolished the "marchandage;" settled strikes, abolished the competition of prison labor, etc.

tion of 1848, only the suggestive power. Though his practicable work failed, his ideas have lived on and have been adopted by various bodies of socialists especially the German school, which reached its height in Karl Marx.

The years 1848-1870 Blanc spent in England where he wrote his twelve volume History of the French Revolution. After the fall of the Empire, he returned to Paris in 1870 and in 1871 was elected to the National Assembly. He died at Cannes, December 6, 1882.

The ninth edition, 1850, is divided into four parts: Part I, called *Industry,* contains the original material with many additions; Part II, *Agriculture;* Part III, *Literary work,* which appeared as early as the fourth edition, 1845. Part IV, *Credit,* also answers to many charges made against statements in the first edition. Each part shows that its special branch of labor, too, must be controlled by the State in order that Free Competition may not bring about its ruin.

This study will set forth a translation of the first edition only.

I wish to express my great appreciation of the kind assistance rendered by Adolph Ebel, Universität Marburg, to whom I am indebted for a copy of the rare first edition without which I could not have made this translation; to Miss Mary C. Gallagher for a careful and critical reading of the manuscript; to N. D. C. Hodges, Cincinnti Public Library, Wm. H. Bishop, Library of Congress, and Walter Smith, University of Wisconsin Library, for the loan of valuable books. To Professor Merrick Whitcomb, however, I owe the inspiration for this task and by inscribing this book to him I wish to express my sincere gratitude.

Marie Paula Dickoré

Cincinnati, 1910

AUTHORS' PREFACE

This work has been especially written for the *Revue du Progrès* in which it has been published serially.

Some laborers have thought that under the actual circumstances it would be good to give more publicity to it than was possible through the circulation of the *Revue du Progrès*

The agitation shown in the last few days is the symptom of a profound evil.

That the police might be concerned in the movement in order to ruin it, is possible. But to make it depend solely upon some foul tricks would be to slander without reason the people of Paris.

The workmen of Paris do not arise to instigate civil war but to demand justice. To comfort them with millions of bayonets is a childish and useless expedient.

Once again, the evil is deep rooted; it demands a prompt remedy. To find that remedy should be the mission of the powerful; to seek it, the duty of every good citizen.

September, 1840.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORGANIZATION OF LABOR.

The institution of modern society rests principally on two men, the one acts as a figure head, the other as headsman. The hierarchy of the old school of politics begins with the king and ends on the gallows.

When the workingmen of Lyons rose, saying, give us bread or kill us, we were very much embarrassed by this demand. As it seemed too difficult to support them, we strangled them.

By this means order was reestablished.

However, the question is to make up your mind whether you are willing to try such bloody experiments. How you would be hated, should you decide on such a dangerous measure. Every delay conceals a storm.

Is not all Paris in a state of excitement as I am writing these lines? Why these numerous meetings of laborers in the different parts of the capital? Why these detachments of cavalry, which patrol our boulevards in a menacing manner? But, God be praised, this time the press is a little less excited. It has been speaking of these agitations in the same serious manner as if the journey of a princelet or a horse-race were in question. Let us take courage! We are entering upon the way of progress. But know well, gentlemen, where the first step leads. You speak of solving problems? From today on a solution will be an imperious necessity. Moreover, what are we waiting for? Has the epic of modern industry further mournful episodes to relate? The recent unfortunate events in Nantes, the riot in Niemes, the massacre in Lyons, the many bankruptcies in Milan, the embarrassments of all money-markets, the troubles in New York, the rise of chartism in England, are not these solemn and formidable warnings abroad? Is it not because so many fortunes are crumbling, because so much gall is mixed with the joy of the rich, so much wrath swelling the heart of the poor man under his rags?

I ask, who really is interested in the maintenance of the economic conditions of to-day? No one at all; neither the rich nor the poor, neither the master nor the slave, neither the tyrant nor

the victim. As for me, I am perfectly convinced that the suffering which is produced through an imperfect civilization is distributed in various forms over the whole of society. Let us look at the life of the rich man; it is filled with bitterness. And why? Is he not in good health? Is he no longer young? Are women and flatterers wanting to him? Does he doubt that he has friends? No, his misery is, that he has reached the end of his enjoyments, his unhappiness is, that he has no further desires. The inability to enjoy—as the result of satiety, that is the poverty of the rich —a poverty without hope. How many of those whom we call happy plunge into a duel because of a longing for excitement, how many seek the dangers and toil of the hunt to escape the tortures of idleness? How many, hurt through their sensitiveness, suffer from secret wounds in the midst of an apparent happiness and sink gradually below the surface of the general suffering, side by side with those who throw life away like a bitter fruit; those who cast it aside like a squeezed lemon. What social disorder is not revealed by this great moral disorder! What a severe lesson to egotism, to pride, to every kind of tyranny that this inequality in the means of enjoyment ends in the equality of anguish.

To every poor person who is pale from hunger there is a rich one who grows pale from fear. "I do not know," said Miss Wardour to the old beggar who had saved her, "what my father will do for our rescuer, but he will certainly secure you against every want for the rest of your life. Accept for the present this trifle." "That I may be robbed of it or murdered, when I wander at nights from place to place," answered the beggar, "or at least be in constant fear of it, which is hardly better. Ah! and besides, who would be fool enough to give me alms if he saw me change a banknote?"

Admirable reply! Walter Scott is in this not only a novelist but he proves himself to be a philosopher as well as a socialist. Who is the unhappier of the two, the blind man who hears the begged coin ring in the cup which his dog guards, or the mighty king who groans when a dower is refused his son?

If a thing is true philosophically is it any less true economically? Thank God! for society there is neither a partial progress nor a partial decline. The *whole* society rises, or falls. When jusice is exercised, *all* have the advantage, when right is obscured the *whole* suffers. A people in which one class is suppressed

resembles a man who has a wounded leg. The injured leg prevents him from using the good one. This sounds paradoxical, the oppressor and the oppressed gain equally by the removal of oppression; they loose equally by its maintenance. Do we want a more striking proof of this? The bourgeoisie has built its sovereignty upon free competition—the basis of tyranny; alas! we see today the decline of the bourgeoisie through this free competition. I have two millions, you say, my competitor has only one; in the arena of industry, armed with the advantage of the lowest price, I shall certainly ruin him. Coward and fool! Do you not see that some merciless Rothschild, armed with your own weapons, will ruin you tomorrow! Then, how could you have the effrontery to complain? The large tradesman, in this wretched system of daily struggles has already swallowed up his smaller competitor. What a Pyrrhic victory! For behold this larger tradesman is swallowed up in his turn by the great-operator who, himself forced to seek new customers at the ends of the world, will begin to play a game of chance, which, like all games, will bring some of its players to crime, others to suicide. Tyranny is not only hateful, but it is also stupid. No intelligence can exist where there is no consideration for others.

Then let us prove:

1. That competition is for the people a system of extermination.
2. That competition is an ever present cause of impoverishment and decline of the bourgeoisie.

When we have proven this it will be clear that we shall establish a solidarity of interests and that social reform means salvation for all members of society without exception.

CHAPTER II.

COMPETITION IS FOR THE PEOPLE A SYSTEM OF EXTERMINATION

Is the poor man a member of society or its enemy? Answer this! He finds the soil everywhere about him already occupied.

May he cultivate the land for himself? No, for the right of the first occupant has become the right of possession.

May he gather the fruits which God has allowed to ripen along the common highway? No, for as the soil so the fruits have been appropriated.

May he hunt or fish? No, for that is a right which the state claims.

May he draw water from a well in a field? No, for the proprietor of the field is, by the law of accretion,[8] also the proprietor of the well.

May he, dying from hunger and thirst, reach out his hand, beseeching the benevolence of his fellow-men? No, for there are laws against begging.

May he, tired and without shelter, stretch his limbs out on the pavement? No, for there are laws against vagabonds.

May he flee from his homicidal fatherland, which denies him everything and endeavor to gain a livelihood far from his birth place? No, for he is permitted to change his place of abode only under certain conditions, impossible for him to fulfill.

What then shall the unfortunate one do? He will tell you: "I have arms, I have intelligence, I have strength, I have youth, take them all and give me in exchange a morsel of bread." Thus the proletarians speak and act today. But even then your answer to the poor one is: "I have no work to give you." What do you want him to do then? It is very clear that there are but two horns to this dilemma, he can either kill himself or kill you.

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8. "Accessio—A term of Roman law used to express the acquisition of property by an addition to former property, due to an accidental circumstance. If, for instance, a plot of land on the bank of a river was increased by the gradual deposit of earth on the bank, the property in the new piece of land was said to be acquired by Accessio." From Palgrave, R. H. Inglis, ed., Dictionary of political economy.

The answer is very simple: *ASSURE* the poor man work. Even with this there is certainly little enough done for justice, and you are still a very long way from the reign of fraternity, but at least you will have removed the necessity for revolt, and his hate is deprived of its justification. Have you already thought of it? When, in order to live, a man offers society his services and then is forced necessarily to attack this same society in order not to die of hunger, he finds himself, although apparently an aggressor, in a state of legitimate defense, and the society which strikes him does not judge him but assasinates him.

The question should be put thus: Is competition a means of ASSURING work to the poor? To put a question of this kind, means to solve it. What does competition mean to workingmen? It is the distribution of work to the highest bidder. A contractor needs a laborer: three apply. "How much do you ask for your work?" "Three francs, I have a wife and children." "Good, and you?" "Two and a half francs, I have no children, but a wife." "So much the better, and you?" "Two francs will do for me; I am single." "You shall have the work." With this the affair is settled, the bargain is closed. What will become of the other two proletarians? They will starve, it is to be hoped. But what if they become thieves? Never mind, why have we our police? Or murderers? Well, for them we have the gallows. And the fortunate one of the three; even his victory is only temporary. Let a fourth laborer appear, strong enough to fast one out of every two days; the desire to cut down the wages will be exerted to its fullest extent. A new pariah, perhaps a new recruit for the galleys.

Can anyone assert that these conclusions are exaggerated, that they are not possible in all cases in which the amount of work is not sufficient for the poor who want to be employed. I shall ask for my part if competition contains in itself the means of doing away with this murderous inequality. If one industry lacks labor, who will vouch for it that in this immense confusion, caused by a universal competition, some other industry does not suffer a surplus of labor? It would be sufficient to invalidate the principle if only twenty men out of thirty-four millions were driven to be thieves in order to live. Destroy these unhappy ones, I say, and let civilization herself take vengenance upon them for the crime which she has committed against them, but do not mention righteousness any more; and since you refuse to judge your judges, to

overthrow your courts, raise a temple to violence and drape a veil about the statue of justice.

Who would be blind enough not to see that under the reign of free competition the continuous decline of wages necessarily becomes a general law with no exception whatsoever? Has population limits which it may never overstep? Are we allowed to say to industry, which is subjected to the daily whims of individual egotism, to industry, which is an ocean full of wreckage: "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." The population increases steadily; command the mothers of the poor to be sterile and blaspheme God who made them fruitful; for if you do not command it, the space will be too small for all strugglers. A machine is invented; demand it to be broken and fling an anathema against science! Because if you do not do it, one thousand workmen, whom the new machine displaces in the workshops, will knock at the door of the next one and will force down the wages of their fellow-workers. A systematic lowering of wages resulting in the elimination of a certain number of laborers is the inevitable effect of free competition.

It is nothing but an industrial process by means of which the proletarians are forced to exterminate each other. Finally, in order that the exacting people can not accuse us of having exaggerated the colors of the picture, we give here in figures the condition of the working class of Paris:

WORK OF WOMEN

Occupation	Daily Wage fr. c.	Dead Season Months	Observations
Washwomen	2 25	4	
Borderers of shoes	75	3	
Other embroiderers	1 50	6	
Burnisher of metal	2 25	4	
Burnisher of porcelain	1 75	6	
Pasteboard worker	1 75	3	
Tinter	1 25	4	
Cap maker	1 50	4	
Stocking weaver	60	0	
Candle maker	1 25	3	
Cutter in a printing house	1 00	0	
Stitcher of straw hats	2 50	6	
Dressmaker	1 25	6	
Blanket maker	1 25	4	
Veil cutter	90	5	
Burnisher of wood	1 25	5	
Carder of buttons	1 25	5	
Flower maker	1 50	4	
Button maker	1 25	4	

WORK OF WOMEN (Continued)

Occupation	Daily Wages fr. c.	Dead Season Months	Observations
Assistant to goldbeater	1 25	5	
Glove maker	1 50	4	
Vest & pants maker	1 75	6	
Linen seamstress in wholesale houses	90	0	
Milliner	1 25	4	
Polisher of silver and enamel	2 25	6	
Cotton winder	90	3	
Polisher of compasses	1 75	4	
Sorter of feathers	1 00	3	
Shoe pinker	1 50	4	
Gold driller	2 50	6	
Tyer of cotton threads	1 00	3	
Presser	2 25	4½	
Dyer	2 50	0	
Vermicelli maker	1 25	3	

WORK OF MEN[9]

Occupation	Daily Wages fr. c.	Dead Season Months	Observations
Gunsmith	3 00	5	
Dresser of straw hats	4 00	7	
Goldbeater	3 50	3	
Butchers' boys	3 00	3	
Baker	4 00	4	
Harness maker	2 25	3	
Gold trinket maker	4 00	6	
Hat maker	4 00	5	
Carpenter	4 00	4	The occupation of Carpenter is dangerous.
Pork butcher	1 00	4	Receive food.
Kettle maker	3 50	4	
Tiler	5 00	4	Dangerous.
Shoe maker	2 50	3	
Cartwright	3 00	5	
Currier	4 00	4	
Cutler	2 75	3	
Carver (wood)	4 00	4	
Confectioner	4 00	6	
Compositor	3 50	3	
Wood gilder	2 50		16 hour day.
Metal gilder		5	Dangerous on account of the mercury.
Cabinet maker	2 50	3	
Tinner	3 75	3	
Type founder	3 50	3	
Founder of copper	4 00	3	Dangerous.
Founder of iron	4 00	3	Each workman has 4 assistants receiving about 2 50.
Blacksmith	4 50	3	
Chimney sweep	4 00	6	
Umbrella maker	3 00	4	
Spectacles maker	3 00	6	

WORK OF MEN (Continued)

Occupation	Daily Wages fr. c.	Dead Season Months	Observations
Maker of compasses	4 00	4	
Glove maker	4 00		
Watch maker	3 50	4	
Printer	4 00	3	
Printers on cotton	4 50	4	
Box makers	3 50	4	
Lithographers	3 00	3	
Lamp maker	3 00	4	
Cabinet maker	3 00	4	
Furrier	2 50	3	
Marble worker	4 50		Day laborers receive 2 50. Boys receive 2 40.
Mason	4 00	4	
Opticians	3 00	6	
Goldsmith	5 00	6	
Paver	4 00	4	Day laborers receive 2 25.
House painter	3 50	5	
Carriage painter	2 75	5	
Plumber	4 50	4	
Porcelain worker	3 50		
Passementrie worker	3 50	6	
Wig maker	85		Bad food and dwellings.
Book binder	3 00	3	
Saddler	2 75	5	
Locksmith	3 50	4	
Cooper	3 00	3	
Wood turner	3 50	4	
Stone cutter	4 00	4	
Clothing cutter	4 00	6	
Chair turner	4 00	3	
Dyer	3 50	4	
Silk dyer	4 00		
Paper hanger	4 00	4	
Tanner	3 50	4	
Varnisher	4 50	4	

9. Author's note—We are indebted for these statistics, which we have collected with great care in order that no one will be tempted to accuse us of exaggeration, to Messrs. Robert Dyer, 60 Gravilliers Street; Rosier, cane maker, 33 Sainte Avoie St.; Landry, cabinet maker, 99 Faubourg St., Martin; Baratre, saddler, 17 Laborde St.; Moreau, clerk, 16 Caire St.

How many tears are represented in every one of these figures, how many cries of anguish! How many violent curses from the depth of the heart! This is the condition of the populace of Paris, the city of science, of arts, the most brilliant capital of the civilized world; a city, whose face shows only too truthfully all the ugly contrasts of a highly praised civilization: beautiful boulevards and dirty streets; brilliantly lighted stores and dark workshops; theaters, in which there is singing, and dark hovels where

is only weeping; monuments for the conqueror and a corner for the drowned, the Arc de l'Etoile and the morgue!

The attraction which these large cities have for the country people is certainly a remarkable fact; these cities where every moment the riches of some mock the poverty of others. Nevertheless, this fact exists and is only too true: industry is the opponent of agriculture. A periodical devoted to the discussion of the present social conditions recently published these sad lines from the pen of a prelate, the bishop of Strassburg: "The mayor of a little town told me: 'Formerly I paid my laborers three hundred francs, today one thousand francs are scarcely sufficient for the same work. They threaten to abandon our work and go to the factories if we do not agree to pay high wages. How much will agriculture, the true wealth of a country, suffer under such conditions!. Add to this the fact that when commercial credit is unsound, when one of these business houses fails, three or four thousand laborers are suddenly thrown out of employment, are without bread, and fall a burden to the state. For these unfortunates do not know how to save for the future; every week sees the fruit of their toil vanish. How dangerous, in times of revolution, exactly when bankruptcies became more numerous, is the population of starved workingmen, who are suddenly thrown from recklessness into absolute want. They even lack the resource of selling their labor to the farmers; they are not accustomed any longer to the hard work of the fields, their enfeebled arms have no longer the strength for it."

Not enough, that the great cities are centers of extreme misery, but it is further a fact that the population of the country is irresistibly drawn towards these centers which engulf them. And as if to aid this wretched condition, is it not true that we are building railroads everywhere? For these railroads, which in a prudently governed society, represent an immense progress, are in our own, only a new misfortune. They render desolate the places where labor is lacking and heap up men in those places where many are seeking in vain to get their little place in the sun; they tend to complicate the frightful disorder which they have introduced into the laboring class, into the distribution of work and of products.

We now come to the cities of second rank.

Dr. Guépin has written, in a little booklet, unworthy, I suppose of being placed in the library of a statesman, the following words:

"As Nantes takes the middle place between the cities of great industries and commerce such as Lyons, Paris, Marseilles, Bordeaux, and the cities of third rank, the conditions of the laborers are there perhaps more favorable than in any other place, it seems to us that we can not select a better example to illustrate clearly the conclusions to which we must arrive and to give them the character of absolute certainty.

"No one who has not stifled every sense of justice in himself can without great sadness, look upon the immense inequality which exists between the joys and sufferings in the case of the poor laborer; to live, for them, means merely not to die!

"The workingman sees nothing more beyond the crust of bread which he needs for himself and his family, nor beyond the bottle of wine, which for a moment dulls the consciousness of his sufferings, neither does he hope for more.

"Do you want to know how he lives? Then step into one of those streets where misery has huddled them together as the Jews, in the middle ages, were crowded into the quarters to which the prejudice of the people had assigned them. Stoop down if you enter one of these sewers which open on the street and are below the level of the pavement; the air is cold and damp, as in a cellar, your feet slip on the slimy earth, you are afraid of falling into the mud. On each side of the low hall and consequently under the ground you find a dark, large, cold room, from the walls trickles dirty water and only one window give acess to air, too small to let the daylight enter and too poorly made to shut tightly. Open the door and walk in, if the foul air is not too repulsive, but take care, for the uneven floor is neither paved nor flagged, or else the stones are so thickly covered with layers of dirt, that it is impossible to see them. Two or three beds, worm eaten and shaky, held together with difficulty by pieces of rope; a straw mattress, a ragged cover, seldom washed because it is the only one perhaps a sheet and a pillow. Behold all that there is of the bed. Wardrobes are not needed in these houses. A sprinning wheel and a loom sometimes complete the furnishings.

"On the other floor the rooms are a little drier, a little lighter but just as dirty and neglected. It is here, that, frequently without fire, these men, during the long winter evenings, work by the light of a flickering pine splinter for fourteen hours a day in order to earn from fifteen to twenty sous.

The children of this class live in the dirt of the street up to the moment when they are able to increase by a few pennies the income of their family through tiresome and brutalizing work; pale, swollen, their eyes red, bleared, so eaten away by scrofulous humor that they can scarcely use them, you could believe they came from an entirely different race than the children of the rich. The difference between the adults of the suburbs and those in the richer districts is not so evident—but a horrible process of selection has taken place; only the strong fruits have developed, while many fell from the trees before they were ripe. After twenty years one is strong or dead. We could add many sad instances, but the specification of expenses of this class of society will speak a still more audible language.

Lodging for one family	25	francs.
Washing	12	"
Fuel	35	"
Repairing of furniture	3	"
Moving (at least once a year)	2	"
Shoes	12	"
Clothing (they wear old clothing given them)	0	"
Medicine	free	
Medical attendance	free	

"If a family earns 300 francs per year, according to this, 196 francs will remain for the food of a family of four or five persons who need,[10] with all privations, at least 150 fr. for bread. 46 fr. remain to buy salt, butter, vegetables and potatoes, not to mention meat, the use of which is unknown. If you consider, that the tavern calls for a certain sum, you will admit that the condition of these families is horrible, in spite of the fact that a few loaves of bread are distributed from time to time by charitable institutions."

We have proven with statistics to what excess of misery the application of the cowardly and brutal principle of competition has brought the people. But all this does not say enough. Misery begets something even worse, let us go to the heart of this discussion.

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10. It is peculiar that so careful a writer as Blanc should have permitted such an error to stand without comment. It could not have escaped his notice that 89 francs from 300 francs leaves 211 francs but he did not correct it until a much later edition after his attention had been called to the fact that a footnote was necessary.

The ancients said, *Malesueda fames,* "hunger is a bad counsellor." A horrible and true saying! But if crime is born of misery, what engenders misery? We shall see directly. Competition is just as fatal to the safety of the rich as to the existence of the poor. For the one ceaseless tyranny, for the other a perpetual threat. Do you know where the greater part of the unfortunates come from who fill the prisons? From some great center of industry. The manufacturing districts furnish to the Grand Jury double the number of accused that is furnished by the agricultural districts. Statistics give on this point arguments to which we have no reply. What are we to think of the present organization of labor, of the conditions which are imposed on it, and the laws which dominate it, if the galleys are recruited from the workshops? Consider, in heaven's name, the terrible words of M. Moreou Christoph: "In the present condition of society, theft, committed by the poor against the rich, is nothing but a reparition, that is to say, the just and reciprocal transmission of a piece of money, of a piece of bread, which returns from the hands of the thief to the hands of the one from whom it is stolen.

"Thou art master of my money," said Jean Sbogar, "I of thy life. This belongs neither to thee nor to me, give it up and I let thee go." And now, ye philanthropists, go and invent some fine penal system. If you have found—with great trouble and work—means and ways of educating the criminal, then want, which awaits the prisoner when he steps out from our places of correction, remorselessly throws him back to crime. The accounts of the penitentiaries of New York show that one of every two discharged criminals is confirmed in his evil life. Ye sagacious physicians, keep the pest-stricken in the hospitals; to give him freedom only means to throw him back into the arms of pestilence. And where is the means to reform the criminal in prison? To come in contact with an incorrigible rogue is fatal for one who is still susceptible to reform. Vice having its standard of honor as well as Virtue. Shall we resort to isolation? What unhappy experiences! In the state of Maine five out of eleven prisoners condemned to solitary confinement became sick, two suicided, the others became beastly idiots. This is the mortality of solitary confinement. You only have to look at the statistics. But what is the good of a remedy which has been studied with so much interest? Wait a moment and see what has been unquestionably proven. The condition of our prisons ought to be better than

that of our work shops. Shall there be a premium on theft? Society tells the poor: attack me if you wish that I should show my solicitude for you! Does this not sound like a joke? Well, this is anyhow the inevitable consequence of the industrial regime, where every factory becomes a school of corruption.

Other fatal consequences:—We mentioned that from individualism springs competition; from competition, fluctuation of wages and their insufficiency. Having reached this point, we come upon the next step, namely: the breaking of the family ties. Every marriage creates increasing expense. Why should poverty mate itself with poverty? The family gives way to illegitimate union. Children are born to the poor, how shall they be fed? This is the reason why we find so many of these unfortunate little creatures dead in dark corners, on the stairs of lonely churches, even in the vestibules of the buildings where laws are made. In order that there may be no doubt as to the cause of infanticide, statistics prove that the number of infanticides which are committed in the fourteen chief industrial departments of France to those of the whole country is in the ratio as 41 is to 121.[11] The greatest evil is always found where industry has chosen its field of action. Ought not the state step forth and tell the poor mother:—I will take care of your children, I will open orphan asylums for them. Should this not be sufficient? No, it ought to go further, it ought to take away the reason which leads to the system of sterility. We have erected foundling asylums, we have given motherhood, which relinquishes its offspring, the benefit of secrecy. But who can now check the progress of unlawful union after the temptation of lust has been freed from the fear of burdens which it enjoins? Thus the moralists cry out! Their assertion is substantiated by the heartless statisticians, and their complaints are even louder. Suppress the foundling asylums, suppress them, if you do not want the number of foundlings to increase to such an extent that all of our united resources cannot suffice to sustain them. The increase in the number of foundlings since the erection of the asylums has been remarkable indeed! January 1, 1784, the number of foundlings amounted to 40,000; in 1820, to 102,103, in 1831, to 122,981; today it has increased to 130,000.[12] The proportion of foundlings

11. Author's Note—See the statistics published by the *Constitutionel* of July 15, 1840.

12. Author's Note—See the books of Mme. Huerne de Pommeuse, Duchâtel, Benoiston de Châteauneuf.

in the last forty years has almost tripled. How is it possible to check this great increase of misery? And what can we do to evade the ever increasing burden of taxes? I am sure that mortality ranges high in these institutions of modern charity; I am assured that many of these infants who are turned over to public benevolence, are killed by the keen air of the street as they come from their hovels, or by the heavy atmosphere of the asylum; it is not new to me that many others die gradually from insufficient food; for, of the 9,727 nurses of foundlings in Paris, only 6,264 own a cow or a goat; I know further that many of the children confided to wet nurses, die from the effect of the milk which other nurselings born in debauchery have poisoned,[13] yet even this mortality does not, alas, relieve us of our burdens. And if we ask how about the increase of taxes in figures, we find the expenditures from 1815 to 1831 have grown; Charente, from 45,232 fr. to 92,454; Landes, from 38,881 to 74,553; Lot-et-Garonne, from 66,579 fr. to 116,986; Loire, from 50,079 to 83,492 fr. And so on for the rest of France. In 1825 the Conseils Genereaux voted an appropriation of 5,915,744 fr. and the end of the year the deficit reached 230,418 fr. To make matters worse, the conditions of health in the foundling asylums better themselves from day to day; the progress in hygiene becomes a calamity! Great God! what conditions are these! And once more, I ask, what shall we do? Somebody has proposed that each mother who wants to hand over her child to the asylum, be submitted to the humiliating obligation of taking a policeman as her confessor. Indeed a fine invention! What can society gain when women have learned not to blush any more? If every youthful indiscretion shall have obtained its permit or if every act of libertinism shall have received a passport, what will happen next? Then through the necessity of this painful confession, the bridle will soon loose its curbing power; women will be raised to shamelessness, chastity will be relegated to oblivion, when the state sets its seal on the violation of all laws of modesty and decorum. Then it would certainly be better to fulfill the wish of many, and remove the foundling asylums. Impious demand! True, gentlemen, it is possible that you will find the taxes increased, but we do not want the number of infanticides to increase. The sum which burdens your budget horrifies you! But, we say,

13. Author's Note—*Philosophie du Buget* by M. Edelstand Duméril.

that when the daughters of the people do not find in their wages the necessary means of existence, it is no more than just that you should lose on one side what you have gained on the other. But is the family ruined through this? Certainly! See to it that labor is reorganized. For, I repeat, the utmost misery, the destruction of the family, is the consequence of competition. Strange fact! that the advocates of this regime should tremble at the shadow of each innovation and do not perceive that the maintenance of this system throws them by a natural and irresistible descent into the most audacious of modern innovations: into Saint-Simonism.

The penning up of children in factories is one of the results of the hideous industrial system. "In France, Philanthropists of Mühlhausen submitted a petition to the chamber saying, children of all ages are employed in every cotton spinnery as well as in all the other industries; we found there children five and six years old. The number of hours of daily work is the same for young and old in the spinneries unless in a commercial crisis—this number is never less than 13½ hours. Walk through an industrial town some morning, and look at the people who pour into the cotton mills! There you will see the unfortunate children, pale, delicate, starved, embittered, with dim eyes and hollow cheeks, breathing with difficulty, their backs bent like old men. Listen to the conversation of these children: their voices are rough and heavy, as if clogged by the unclean vapors which they are forced to inhale in the cotton factories. Would to heaven that this description were exaggerated!" But these facts are based on observations, collected by conscientious men and entered in official reports. The proofs, moreover, are only too convincing. M. Charles Dupin has laid before the Chamber of Peers these facts; that in the ten *départements* most given to industry in France, for every 10,000 men called to the army, 8,980 were feeble or deformed; in the *départements* given to agriculture, only 4,029. In 1837, to get 100 men strong enough to endure the hardships of war, it was necessary to reject 170 in Rouen; 157 in Nimes; 169 in Elboeuf; 100 in Mühlhausen,[14] These figures show the natural results of competition. In helping immeasurably to impoverish the workmen, we force them to find in their children an addition to their wages. Wherever competition dominates, it

14. Author's Note—See the above cited statistics.

has been necessary to employ children. In England, for instance, the greater part of the work shops are filled by children. The MONTHLY REVIEW, quoted by M. D'Haussez, estimates the number of laborers in the factories of Dundee who have not reached the age of 18 to be 1,078; but of these the majority are under 14; a great number under 12; some younger than 9 years, yes, even six or seven year old children were employed.

If we accept the statement of the "AUSLAND," quoted by M. Edelstand Duméril, the consequences of this terrible burden on childhood are as follows:—amongst 700 children of both sexes, picked at random, in Manchester, we found among the 350 not employed in factories 21 sick, 88 in poor health, 241 in full health; while of the 350 children working in factories, 75 were sick, 154 in poor health and only 145 in full health.

A system which forces the fathers to exploit their own children is a homicidal one. From the moral point of view can we think of anything more disastrous than to employ both sexes in factories? It means to inoculate the children with vice. Can we read, without horror, of the eleven-year old boy whom Dr. Cumins treated in a hospital for syphilis? And what conclusion shall we draw from the fact that the age in the English house of refuge averages 18 years! We might multiply these sad proofs; in Paris for 12,607 women inscribed on the register of prostitutes the cities furnish 8,641; and all belong to the artisan class. M. Lorain, professor at the Collége Louis le Grand, has compiled a report as sad as it is remarkable, concerning the conditions of public schools in the kingdom. After minutely enumerating the odious victories of industry over education and its influence on the morals of children, he adds, that France is on the verge of being infected by the customs which have gained root in England, where, as a table of statistics in the JOURNAL OF EDUCATION has proven, in four days 144 children have frequented low dives. How is it possible without a reorganization of labor to stay the rapid decay of the population? By laws which regulate the employment of child-labor in factories. This is now being tried. In France, the philanthropy of the law-makers is so great that the Chamber of Peers fixed the age at which a child may be made a part of a machine at eight years. According to this law, overflowing with love and charity, a child of eight years shall not be compelled to work longer than eight hours; nor a child of twelve years longer than twelve hours per day. This is only

a plagiary of the "Factory Bill." And what a plagiary! But, after all, this law must be obeyed; but how can it be possible? What shall the law-makers answer the unhappy father, who says to them: "I have children of eight and nine years; if you shorten their time of work, you diminish their wages. I have children of six or seven years, but no bread to feed them; you forbid me to send them to work, do you want me to let them starve?" The fathers are unwilling to shorten the hours, you cry out. Is it possible to force them? And on what law, on what point of justice should such a violence be based in the face of poverty? Under this law we cannot respect humanity in the child without outrageously insulting it in the father.

The *Courier Français* has lately admitted that this is a very serious difficulty; I readily believe it. Thus you see there is no remedy possible without social reform. Thus under the sovereignty of competition labor will bequeath to the future a generation decrepit, deformed, rotten, half gone into decay. O, ye rich ones, who will die for you in war? You must have soldiers!

But upon this annihilation of physical and moral capabilities of the sons of the poor, closely follows the annihilation of their intellectual faculties. Thanks to the imperious demands of the law, there are in every locality elementary teachers, but the necessary means for their support are granted everywhere with a shameful stinginess. Yet this is not all: not long ago, in travelling through the most civilized provinces of France, workmen whom we asked why they did not send their children to school, answered every time, that they send them to the factories instead. Through personal experience we verified the truth of this general acknowledged fact, which can also be read in the report of M. Lorain, a member of the University, who says literally:—"Wherever a factory, a spinnery, an arsenal, a shop is opened, you may close the school." What economic condition is this in which we find industry in a strife with education? And what success can a school show under such an economic condition? Go to the villages and see who are the teachers. Sometimes they are released convicts, vagabonds and adventurers, who pretend to be schoolmasters; sometimes half-starved teachers who like to exchange the ferrule for the plough and teach only because they have nothing better to do. Most everywhere children are penned up in damp, unhealthy rooms. Yes, even in horse stables, where they profit at least in winter by the warmth which

the animals give out. There are villages where the teachers keep school in a room which serves him at the same time for kitchen, dining room, and bed-room. If the children of the poor receive an education at all, it is thus handicapped, and still these are the privileged ones. These details, let me emphasize again, are given by the official reports. Those writers who pretend that the people ought to be educated, say that without education no improvement is possible, that reform must begin there. The reply is very simple; if the poor man has to choose between school and work, his choice will not be doubtful for a single moment. A strong argument speaks for the factory which secures its preference; in school, the child is taught, but in the factory, paid. In this way under the reign of competition, the intelligence of the poor is stifled when they have scarce left the cradle; their hearts are ruined, their bodies are destroyed. Threefold sin, threefold murder!

But a minute's patience, dear reader, I am soon at the end of my sorrowful evidence. It is an incontestable fact that the growth of population is considerably more rapid amongst the poor than the rich. According to the *Statistique de la civilization européenne* the birth rate in the better districts of Paris is only $\frac{1}{32}$ of the population, while in the poorer it is $\frac{1}{26}$. This disproportion is a general fact and M. de Sismondi explains it very well in his work on political economy because of the impossibility of the day laborer to either hope for anything in the future or to provide for the future. Only he who knows himself master of to-morrow, can regulate the number of his children to his income; but he who lives from hand to mouth, subjects himself to the yoke of a mysterious fatality, to which he consecrates his progeny, because he himself has been consecrated to it. On the other hand, the asylums threaten society with an inundation of beggars. What remedy is there against this plague of the country? Yes, if pestilence were only more frequent, or peace would not last so long! For, in the present economic condition, annihilation is the simplest remedy! But wars are becoming less and less frequent; cholera lets us wait so long; where shall all this end? And what shall we finally do with our poor? It is evident that any society in which food does not keep pace with the birth-rate, is tottering on the edge of on abyss. France is in just such a situation. M. Rubichon, in his book entitled *Social Mechanism,* has proven this frightful truth beyond any doubt. It is true,

poverty kills. According to Dr. Villermé, out of 20,000 individuals born at the same time, of whom 10,000 are among the rich and 10,000 among the poor, 54% of the former and 62% of the latter died before they reached the age of forty years. The number of people at the age of 90 years is in the rich district 82 and in the poor, 53 to 10,000 inhabitants. Vain remedy! This frightful remedy of death. Misery brings into existence more unhappy ones than it permits to reach maturity. Once more, which side shall we take? The Spartans killed their slaves; Valerius had the mendicants drowned, in France certain laws were passed in the sixteenth century condemning them to the gibbet.[15] We can take our choice between these just punishments! Why do we not embrace the doctrine of Malthus? Oh, but Malthus has not been logical, he has not carried his system to its logical conclusion. Let us adhere to the theory of the *Livre du Meutre,* published in England, Feb., 1839, or better still, to the pamphlet written by Marcus, of which our friend Godfrey Cavaignac has given an account, in which it is proposed to suffocate all children of the working classes after the third one, conditional damages being paid to the mother for this patriotic deed? You laugh? But it is a serious book which gives these proposals, written by an author-philosopher. Whole volumes of commentaries have been written about it, the most important writers of England have discussed it, and finally condemned it with indignation for its hideous cruelty—and it is not at all a ridiculous book! It is a fact that England has no right to laugh at these blood-thirsty follies, this same England which found herself forced by the principles of competition to another immense extravagance to the poor-tax. Will our readers permit us to recommend to their meditations a few lines taken from E. Bulwer's book:—*England and the English:*

"The independent day-laborer can buy with his wages only 122 ounces of food a week, including 13 ounces of meat.

The healthy poor, who become a burden to the parish, receives for food 151 ounces per week, including 21 ounces of meat.

The convict gets 239 ounces per week, including 38 ounces of meat."

In other words, the material condition of the convict in England is more favorable than the recipient of charity, and his position is again better than that of the honest laborer. That is

15. Author's Note—See the authors cited by M. Edelstand Duméril in his *Philosophie du Buget,* vol. 1, pp 11.

monstrous, is it not? Well, it is only a necessity. England has laborers, but not so many as inhabitants. But as they can only choose between the maintenance of the poor or their annihilation, the English law makers have decided for the first; they did not have as much courage as emporer Valerius, that is all. It only remains to ascertain if the law makers of France, in the face of all this, considered in cold blood the terrible consequences of the economic regime which they borrowed from England. I insist upon this point! Competition breeds misery; and this fact is proven by figures. Misery is dreadfully prolific, this fact is proven by figures. The fertility of the poor throws unfortunates into society who ought to work, but who can not find work; this fact is also proven by figures. Once arrived at this point, society cannot act otherwise than to kill the poor or to feed them free! Cruelty or madness!

CHAPTER III

COMPETITION IS THE CAUSE OF THE DECLINE OF THE BOURGOISIE.

I could stop here. A society like the one I have just described is in peril of civil war. What does it matter that the bourgeoisie congratulates itself that lawlessness has not yet reached its heart, when anarchy already lies threatening at her feet. But does not the reign of the bourgoisie harbor in itself all elements of an early and inevitable dissolution?

Cheapness is the big word which according to the school of economists of Smith and Say, embraces all benefits of free competition; but why do we stubbornly refuse to take into consideration the results of cheapness and its relation to the momentary usefulness which the consumer derives from it? Cheapness benefits only those who are consumers, while it sows amongst the producers the seeds of destructive anarchy. Cheapness is the bludgeon with which the rich producer fells the less fortunate. Cheapness is the trap into which the bold speculators lure industrious workingmen. Cheapness is the death sentence of the manufacturer who is not able to advance the money for a costly machine which his wealthy rival is able to have. Cheapness is an ambush in which monopoly lays in wait; it is the death-knell of the small industry, for the small trade, the small property; in one word, it is the destruction of the bourgoisie in favor of an industrial oligarchy.

Shall cheapness be condemned altogether? Nobody will dare to suggest such an absurdity. But it is the peculiarity of false principles that they change good into evil and corrupt all things. In the system of competition cheapness is only a temporary and apparent benefit. It is only maintained so long as the combat is raging; as soon as the stronger has overcome all his rivals, the prices rise. Competition leads to monopoly for the same reason that cheapness leads to exorbitant prices. Thus that which has been an instrument of war, used by the producers amongst themselves, becomes now—sooner or later—the cause of impoverishment for the consumer. Combine all these causes with those which we have already enumerated, first of all the

unregulated increase of the population, and we shall have to accept the fact that the impoverishment of the masses of consumers is an evil which is the direct result of competition.

On the other hand, this competition, which aims to dry up the sources of consumption, forces production to a destructive activity. The confusion resulting from the general conflict of interests, takes away from the single producer the knowledge of the state of the market. Groping in the dark, he is dependent on chance alone for the sale of his products. Why should he curb his production as long as he can make up his losses in the exceptionally elastic wages of his laborers? We see daily that manufacturers continue the work, although at a loss, because they do not want to diminish the value of their machinery, their tools, their raw materials, their buildings and furthermore not lose their customers, and because they—like the gambler, do not care to lose the possibility of a lucky winning in industry, which, under the domineering power of competition, is scarcely anything else than a game of chance.

Therefore we cannot often enough insist upon this result, that competition forces production to increase and consumption to decrease; thus it goes directly in opposition to the reasonable purpose of economic science; it is at the same time oppression and madness.

When the bourgeoisie rose against the old power and saw it sink to the ground under its heavy blows, it declared that these old powers had been stricken with blindness and ignorance.

Well, today the bourgeosie is in the same position, for it does not perceive how its own blood flows nor how it is tearing at its vitals with its own hands.

Yes, the economic order of today threatens the property of the middle class, as it has also destroyed in a cruel manner the property of the poor.

Who has not read of the lawsuits to which the fight between the *Messageries françaises* and the *Messageries royals* and the *Messageries Lafitte and Caillard* had given cause? What a law suit! How it laid bare all the weak points of our economic conditions. And yet this law suit passed by practically unnoticed. They have paid less attention to it than they would have given to any commonplace parliamentary debate. The most astonishing thing, the most incomprehensible in connection with this law suit is the fact that nobody drew the conclusion from it which it

naturally offered. What was it all about? Two companies were accused of uniting to destroy a third one. This created a great disturbance. Law had been violated, that protecting law which in order to prevent oppression, prohibits coalitions whose purpose is to prevent the oppression of the weak by the strong. Is this not a most wretched condition? What! The law forbids him, who possesses 100,000 fr. to consolidate with another who has 100,000 fr. against some one who has just as much, because this means the unavoidable destruction of the latter, and this same law permits the owner of 200,000 fr. to wage war upon him who has only 100,000 fr. Wherein lies the difference between these two cases? It is not here as there the war of the greater capital against the lesser? And is it not always the fight of the strong against the weak? And is this fight not always an odious warfare because of its inequality? What a contradiction! One of the lawyers pleading in this celebrated case said: "It is permissable for any one to ruin himself in order to ruin others." The statement is true under present conditions and it is found to be very correct. THAT IT IS PERMISSABLE FOR ANY ONE TO RUIN HIMSELF IN ORDER TO RUIN OTHERS!!!

What do the present statesman think and expect when they cry out convinced of the imminence of the peril as did lately the *Constitutionnel* and the *Courrier Français:*

"The only remedy consists in driving this system to the extreme, to throw down everything that opposes its complete development; in short to complete the absolute freedom of industry, through the absolute freedom of commerce." What! is that a remedy? Do you call the enlargement of the field of battle the only means of avoiding the misery of war? What! are there not industries enough which ruin themselves; will you add to this lawlessness the incalculable complications of a new means of destruction? This is the road that leads to chaos.

We can less easily understand those who imagine that any mysterious combination of two opposite principles would be possible. It is a very poor idea to try to graft association on competition, this would be about the same as if we should take hermaphrodites to replace eunuchs. The association is a progress only when it finds universal application. In the past few years we have seen many profit-sharing societies develop. Who does not know their scandalous histories? If one individual fights against another individual, or one association against another

one—it is always war, always a reign of violence which makes use of deceit and tyranny with hypocrisy. What else is the association of capitalists amongst themselves? Here are the laborers, who are not capitalists, what are you going to do with them? As associates you reject them, do you wish to make enemies of them?

Do you mean to say that, the extreme concentration of personal property, neutralized and lessened by the principle of division of inheritances and that the power of the bourgeoisie, if destroyed by industry, can be reestablished through agriculture? What an erroneous idea! The excessive division of real estate must, if we do not take care, lead us back to the reconstruction of the great landed estate. We seek in vain to deny this; the parcelling of soil, small proprietorship, the spade instead of the plow, dull routine, labor unaided by science. Parcelling of soil deprives agriculture of machinery as well as of capital. Without machinery there is no progress; without capital no stock. How can—under such circumstances—small farms endure the competition of the larger ones without being absorbed? The result has not yet been shown, because minute division of land has not been carried out to its farthest limits. But have patience! See what is happening in the meantime! Every small proprietor is a day laborer; for two days in the week he is his own master, the other time he is the slave of his neighbor. And if he ever has the wish to enlarge his property, he steps so much nearer to complete servitude. And thus it happens that the farmer, who owns only a few acres of poor land, which barely brings 4 percent if he works it himself, can seldom withstand the temptation to enlarge his property if he has a chance. He takes a mortgage on it at 10, 15 or 20 percent. For if there is no credit in the country, usury steps in and takes its place. The results are evident! The figures in France of real estate indebtedness amount to 13 thousands of millions. This does not mean anything else but that side by side with those capitalists who become captains of industry, a handful of mere usurers start up who try to make themselves masters of the land. Thus the bourgeoisie advances towards dissolution in the cities as well as in the country. From all sides it is threatened, its position undermined ,and its existence destroyed.

To avoid commonplaces and cheap truths I have not mentioned the horrifying moral corruption with which industry in the

present order, or better, disorder, has harrassed the bourgeoisie. Everything has become salable and competition has invaded even the domain of thought.

Thus factories ruin trades; commercial houses absorb the modest little ones; the tradesman, who is his own master, is replaced by the day laborer who is not his own master; cultivation by means of the plow gives way to the spade; and the field of the poor falls under the shameful control of the usurer; failures of business houses become more numerous; industry is transformed through the poorly regulated extension of credit to gambling in which the gain is assured to no one, not even to the scoundrel Finally this vast disorder which is created especially to awaken in the souls of every one jealousy, suspicion and hatred, and by and by to stiffle all nobler feelings and to dry up all sources of faith, devotion, and poetry, this is the despicable but too truthful picture of the results due to the application of free competition.

We have borrowed this wretched system from the English. Let us see at a casual glance what this system has done for the glory and prosperity of England.

CHAPTER IV.

COMPETITION CONDEMNED BY THE EXAMPLE OF ENGLAND.

Englishmen say that capital and labor are by nature two antagonistic powers; how can we force them to live side by side and aid one another? For this there is only one remedy; the laborer must never lack work; the employer, on the other hand, should always find—in the ready market for his product—the means to pay work accordingly. Does not this solve the problem? Who will have the right or the heart to complain in case production should finally become active and consumption finally elastic! The wages of the one will always be sufficient, the profit of the other always satisfactory. Let us then, open the doors of the infinite to human activity, nothing will limit its enthusiastic flight. Let us proclaim "laissez faire" honestly and without restriction. Is England's production not sufficiently varied to afford commerce a larger career? Well, we shall find sailors and construct ships which will give us the commerce of the world. Do we live on an island? Well, then, our ships give access to all continents. Is not the amount of raw material produced by our country too limited? Very well, then let us seek raw materials at the end of the world. All nations will become consumers of the products of England, which will work for all people. To produce, always to produce and to solicit other nations by every means to induce consumption, is the work which the power of England will employ. This will make her rich; this will develop the genius of her sons.

A gigantic plan! A plan almost as egoistic as absurd, and still one which England, for two centuries, has followed with incredible perseverance! Oh, surely, to be shut up on a little, not very fertile, foggy island, and to go forth from there one day to conquer the universe, not with soldiers but with merchants, to send thousands of ships to the East, to the West, North and South, to teach hundreds of countries the use of their own treasure, to sell America the products of Europe, and Europe the riches of India; to bind all nations to her existence and to fetter them in some way to her girdle by the innumerable ties of a world-span-

ning commerce; to find in gold the power capable of balancing the sword, and in Pitt the man capable to make the audacity of a Napoleon hesitate; and in all this is a quality of greatness, which dazzles and astonishes the mind.

But what has Englnd not dared to accomplish her end! Up to what point has she not pushed the rapacity of her hope and the madness of her pretentions. How has she conquered Issequibo and Surinam, how Ceylon and Demerary, how Tabago and St. Lucia, how Malta and Corfu—enmeshing the whole world in the immense network of her colonies? We know how it has settled itself in Lisbon since the time of the Methuen Treaty, and by what abuse of power she has founded in India her commercial tyranny; side by side with the sovereignty of Holland, mixed with the debris of the colonial structure erected by Vasco de Gama and an Albuquerque. No one denies the damage which her cupidity has imparted to France; every one knows by what strategems, by what perfidious instigations she has always known how to drench the Spanish colonies in America with blood. What shall we say about the violence by which England has secured the empire of the sea for so long? Has she ever respected the right of neutral countries or even acknowledged them? Has the right of blockade as exercised by England not become the most arrogant of tyrannies? And has she not made the right of search the most odious of all brigandage? And what is the purpose of all this? Only to have—let us repeat it—raw materials for the manufacturer and to serve her customers. This thought has been the dominating one in England for two centuries, that in her colonies the culture of articles of food—such as rice, sugar, coffee, were neglected, while to the culture of cotton and silk a feverish attention was given. But why? While England put exorbitant, and we might say homicidal, duty on the importation of food stuffs, she opened to all raw materials her ports almost free of duty, a monstrous anomaly, which induced M. Rubichon to say, "Of all the nations of the world the English have worked most and fasted most."

To this leads a merciless political economy of which Ricardo has so complaisantly announced the premises and of which Malthus has drawn with the utmost sangfroid the horrible conclusion.

This political economy carried the germ of vice in itself, which will render it fatal to England and to the whole world.

It advanced the theory that nothing was of importance but to try to find consumers; it was necessary to add, solvent consumers. But how dare they awaken a wish, without the possibility of its fulfillment? Could we not foresee that England, while substituting her activity for the activity of those nations whom she wished to have as her consumers, must end with the destruction of these people, because she closed for them the source of all wealth, namely, labor? Could England pose exclusively as the producing nation and hope at the same time that her wares would find a continuous market amongst the peoples that became *exclusively* her consumers? This hope was evident madness. The day will dawn when the English will perish from prosperity by causing the others to perish from poverty. The day will dawn when the consuming nation cannot find raw material in exchange; and what will this mean to England? The glut of markets, the ruin of numerous factories, the misery of the whole mass of laborers, the universal destruction of credit.

In order to know how far the carelessness, the folly of production goes, we need only to search the history of England's trade and commerce. At one time English merchants sent to Brazil, where they had never seen ice, whole ship loads of skates;[16-1] at another time, Manchester exported to Rio de Janeiro[16-2] more wares in one week than they have used in the last twenty years. Everywhere production in using her sources of help in an exaggerated way, cripples her activity without rendering herself account of the possible consumption of her production.

But again, to cause a nation to entrust to another the care of developing elements of labor which it possesses, means to gradually take away the capital and to impoverish it, and consequently to make it more unfit for consumption, as it can only consume that for which it is able to pay. The general impoverishment of other nations which England has needed in order to have her products consumed, is the vicious circle in which England has been moving for the past two centuries; this is the mistake, the deep, incorrigible error of her system. Thus (we insist upon this point of view because it is the most important), England has brought herself to a strange position, unique in history; to bring about for herself two equally effective causes

16. Author's Note—1. Mawe, Travels in Brazil.
2. ibid.

of ruin, the one in the work of the people, the other in their inertia; this labor creates competition for her which she cannot always conquer; their inertia, takes from her its consumers without which she cannot get along.

This has already happened on a small scale, but inevitably will happen on a larger one. What losses has not England already sustained because her products have grown with a greater rapidity than the articles which the other nations would exchange for them? How often has England not produced, after many warnings, the results of which have cruelly punished the extravagance of overproduction. We cannot so soon forget the great crisis, which terminated in the English intrigues in the countries lying between Mexico and Paraguay. Scarcely had the news reached England that a field had been opened for industrial adventures in South America, when all hearts beat immediately with joy, and every brain was excited. All heads were turned. The production in England was never in such a paroxism of frenzy. If the speculators were to be believed, only a few days and a few ships were necessary to transport all the immense wealth which America possessed to Great Britain. The confidence was so great, that the bankers hastened to coin money, hoping to have the first returns. And what was the result of this great movement? They had calculated on everything except the existence of articles of exchange and the facility of transporting them. America kept her gold, which they could not extract from her mines; that country, which had been devastated by fire and sword, had nothing to give in exchange for the merchandise brought to it—neither cotton nor indigo. England knows as well as Europe what this great mistake has cost her both in millions and in tears!

Let no one say that we drew the conclusions from the exceptions to the rule. The evil we have pointed out has given rise to all the evils in its train. For, while England exhausted herself colonially in incredible efforts to render the whole universe tributary to her industry, what spectacle has her inner history offered to an attentive observer? Workshops succeeded workshops, the invention of to-morrow succeeded the invention of yesterday; the furnaces of the North ruined by those of the West; the laboring population increased beyond all measure under the stimulus of a limitless competition; the number of cattle, which as food of man, fell far behind the number of horses, which men

were obliged to feed; the bread of charity replaced, little by little, the bread of labor; the poor-tax was introduced and served to increase poverty. In short, England presented to the surprised and indignant world a spectacle of extreme misery, hatched under the wings of extreme opulence. Such are the results due to public policy which is based on the principle of national egotism: England had to seek consumers everywhere and at any price.

And to obtain these horribly disastrous results, how many injustices had England to commit, how often to encourage treason, to sow discord, to foment wars, subsidize iniquitous coalitions and combat glorious ideas!

I do not wish to go any further, I will try to end this sad history, so that no one can accuse me of wanting to insult the strong old English race. No, I can and will not forget that England, in spite of the evil which she has done to the world and to my country, can claim for herself, in the history of nations, many immortal pages; that England, before all other peoples of Europe, has been visited by freedom, that its laws, even under the yoke of an overbearing aristocracy, have rendered sincere and solemn homage to the dignity of mankind; that from its bosom came forth the wildest but also the most powerful cry that was ever raised against the tyranny of the papacy, united with that of the inquisition; that it is even to-day the only country which the furies of political life have not rendered inhospitable and fatal to the weak. For there, at least, you found an asylum, you poor noble exiles, unconquered but wounded champions; there you reassembled the remnants of your fortunes, there you found the life of the soul and intellect, perhaps the only thing which the rage of our enemies left you in your great disaster. And from there you followed our thoughts, we, almost as unhappy, as much in exile as you were; for had we not to search for our fatherland, though we lived in its midst, but alas! could not recognize it in its degradation?

In addition England has made full expiation. There is, says a new writer, a penal code for the nations as well as for the individual. This truth has been grieviously proven in the history of England. Where is her power to-day? The empire of the seas eludes her. Her possessions in the Indies are threatened. Not so long ago the English Lords almost held the stirrup

of the victor of Toulouse, whom they dared no longer call the victim of Waterloo.

And what has become of the English aristocracy, the most vigorous and most splendid of the world? Who are, indeed, her leaders? Is it Lord Lindhurst, the son of an obscure painter, or Sir Robert Peele, the son of a cotton manufacturer, created Baronet by Pitt? Or Lord Wellington, this feeble offspring of the Irish race and the bourgoisie of the Wellesly's. These are the heads of the English aristocracy, they are the ones who lead it and govern it and represent it. And these men are not even of her blood!

Not long ago the Marquis of Westminster said in the House of Lords: "They tell us we should sacrifice one fifth of our revenues, we, the possessors of the soil of Great Britain! Are those who say this ignorant of the fact that the other four fifths belong to our creditors?"

The exaggeration of these words is evident. Unfortunately it is only too true that the inalienability of fiefs in England protects the larger part of the income of the English noblemen against every loss, and these revenues are immense. If they amount—as it seems certain—to 135 millions for the 500 families of the Peers of England and to one billion three hundred millions for the four hundred thousand people who compose the families of baronets, knights and the gentry, we have to acknowledge that the British nobility knew how to seize a very good part of the spoils of the globe! But we have seen what a powerful menace hangs over English commerce. The aristocracy is a sleeping partner in all the industries, and it is easy to predict that the material punishment will not be long delayed.

As far as its moral chastisement is concerned, that could not be more cruel. The wealth of all these great lords makes them the prey of a certain vague melancholy, an illness sent by God to the great of the earth to curb them with the bridle of pain; pain, that imposing and terrible lesson of equality. What do the proud lords find in reality in the midst of their enjoyment? They find therein the bitterness of thought and the eternal disquiet of the heart. They hasten away from the fogs of their island and go to squander their ill-gotten gold in all the parts of the world whence they have stolen it, dragging with them the burden of their enervating wealth.

To-day it can only concern us to know if the bourgoisie

of France will imitate the English. It concerns us to know whether in seeking new resources for her industrial power, she will supplant on the ocean the hated supremacy of St. George's banner? For a great people, this is the irresistible tendency of the logic of competition. But England will not lose the scepter of the seas without a struggle. May the French bourgoisie then rush as quickly as possible to stifle the English on their island.

CHAPTER V.

COMPETITION WILL NECESSARILY RESULT IN A DEATH STRUGGLE BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

In order that an alliance should be a natural one between two nations, each must bring into the contract reciprocal advantages; they must have different resources which vary in their nature and purpose. France and England are two powers which must expand into colonial possessions in order to exist, and this is the first obstacle in a durable alliance. When Rome was extending her territory by war, and Carthage desired to expand through commerce, Rome and Carthage met, after they had taken possession of all the known countries, and fought it out.

Because the economic conditions of France and England are the same to-day, thus making these two nations necessarily maritime, a conflict between them is inevitable. For is not Free Competition the principle which dominates our social order to-day? Must not free competition have as a corrollary every sort of advantageous production? Must not such a production, whose growth is so impetuous and so unregulated, in order to find new outlets, conquer the world industrially and rule the sea?

On that day on which we destroy the guild system the fact arises quite naturally that there is one nation too many in this world, which makes it necessary that either France must perish or that England be wiped from the map. New complications were added to the long rivalry which in the fifteenth century brought a Duke of Bedford to Paris and forced Charles VII to flee to Bourges.

In 1789, France adopted all the traditions of the English school of political economy; she became an industrial nation of the same kind as England. Launched in the rapid current of competition she forces us to establish branches everywhere and to have our agents in all ports. But to dispute the ocean with England would be to deprive her of the life. And she has understood this very well. Consequently the coalitions paid by her; the continental blockade; and the terrible duel between Pitt and Napoleon. But with Pitt dead, and Napoleon slowly

assassinated, it is necessary to begin the struggle over again. There is but one way to avoid it! That is to make of France a nation essentially agricultural, while England remains industrial. Our statesmen do not doubt this and when M. Thiers said, not long ago, to the Tribune:—"France must be satisfied with being the first of the continental nations." M. Thiers spoke a word whose far-reaching effect he certainly ignored. For, if we had cried out:—"Do you wish to change the foundation of our social order?" what would he have answered! Vast as it is, the ocean is not large enough for France and England at the same time, governed as they are by the same economic laws and animated consequently by the same spirit. Have not these two nations, seeking colonial expansion and not being able to live unless under this condition, met each other at every point and checked each other at every turn? This is the point at issue. Moreover, the motive from which England has excluded France from the last treaty is altogether a commercial one. There is no possible doubt on this point. Nothing is clearer than the language of the *Globe,* the special organ of Lord Palmerston. According to this journal, if Lord Palmerston wished to run all the risks of a rupture with France; if he had persuaded the cabinet of St. James to gain by the revolts against Mehemed Ali, which broke out in Syria, it is because he saw how important it was for England to keep this country within her mercantile protectorate. The plan of Lord Palmerston is very simple; he regards Syria as the key to the Orient and this key he will put into the hands of the English. *They made an agreement with the Divan by which terms the pashas or viceroys of Syria act in accordance with the views of the representatives of the British government.* The English minister, as we see, makes no secret of his designs. To open to British ships three routes leading to India; the first through the Red Sea, the second through Syria and the Euphrates; the third through Syria, Persia and Beluchistan, such is the substance of England's hopes. In order to realize this plan, we see that she must consent to give Constantinople to Russia. Having once opened these three routes to India, *she will line them with markets,* so the *Globe* ingeniously predicts. Thus the present England is still the old England! To-day, as yesterday, as always, this race, indominable in its cupidity, must seek and find consumers. Has England linen and cotton goods which call for markets? Quick! conquer the

Orient. Does she wish to humiliate France? No, it is quite another thing. It is a question of her existence. And she cannot do this according to her economic constitution, except on the condition of subjugating the entire world to her merchandise.

That, which for England is a question of life or death, is also a question of life or death for France, if the principle of competition is maintained. For this reason, competition is a necessary upheaval of nations, all men of noble impulse will applaud; but ought she to draw it in order to sustain the traditions of English brigandage? Alas! it is hardly worth while to pillage the whole universe to arrive at the poor tax.

The social order is bad—the question is how to change it. Before we decide what is, in our case, the possible remedy, let us determine which is the most important issue—political reform, in which many are interested, or social reform which appeals to many others.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NECESSITY OF A DOUBLE REFORM.

There are many audacious thinkers to-day, who meditate on the organizations of labor. "What do all your parlimentary disputes, all your petty conflicts over the ministry, and all your palace revolutions matter to us?" they say. "Descend with us into the heart of society which is at the point of dissolution: you will find there many other things to inspire fear or hope. Here are the abysses, which we must fathom. What after all are governments? Merely transitory forms. In order that society may be regenerated; the power which ceases to be in harmony with the new civilization, falls of itself and through its own weakness."

Is all this sophistry! Yes, without doubt a renovated society is called a new power; but is the existence of the power so independent of society that one may be changed without modifying the other? When you have found the means of inaugurating the principles of association and of organizing labor according to the rules of reason, of justice and of humanity, how do you expect to arrive at the realization of your doctrines? Power, this is organized force. Power will rest on interests which are blind, but which are obstinate in their blind opposition to everything that is new. The government has legislatures which threaten you with their laws, courts which reach you with their summons, soldiers who menace you with their bayonets. Therefore possess yourself of this power if you do not wish to be overwhelmed by it. Take it for an instrument, but at the risk of finding it an obstacle.

Furthermore:—the emancipation of the proletarians is a very complicated undertaking; it implies too many reforms, it disturbs too many customs, it clashes with too many predjudices, it contradicts not only in reality but in appearance, too many interests, it is madness to believe that it can accomplish its ends by a series of partial efforts or isolated attempts. It is necessary to use the whole power of the state and this is certainly not too great an undertaking for so great a need. That which the proletarians lack to free themselves are the tools of labor: these the government must furnish them.

No, without a political reform, a social reform is not possible, for, if the second is the *goal,* the first is the *means.*

But we must not conclude from this, that the discussion of social questions is useless, even dangerous, and that we must begin by conquering the government, only to see what can be done later? You might as well say:—let us begin, we will see later where we have to go.

This error is common enough to-day, and it must be confessed that it is shared by some eminent minds. We do not deny the necessity of solving social questions; we even acknowledge that in order to bring about a social reform the political reform must be accomplished; but we believe that the discussion of these grave difficulties must be put off until the political revoluton of to-morrow. Such is our opinion.

Revolutions which do not baffle are those whose goal is precise and which have a definite beginning.

Look at the bourgeoise revolution of 1789! When it broke forth, every one could have outlined the program. It came fulfledged from the *Encyclopaedia,* this great laboratory of the ideas of the eighteenth century, it had only taken actual possession in '89 of a domain, already morally conquered. This is so true, that the Third Estate did not see any inconvenience in turning itself into legislators. The imperative decrees! Everywhere the demand was for absolute legislation! And why? Because, in the minds of all, the object of the revolution was clearly defined. They knew what they wanted, why and how they wanted it. Let us open the famous cahier of this period; the revolution is all there, for the constitution of 1781 is nothing but a faithful reproduction. How powerfully it has been established, how this entire revolution of '89 is rooted in the depth of the social body! The tempests of the convention have passed over in vain; the Empire has sought in vain to eclipse it by virtue of its cities taken and battles won; the Restoration has fought it in vain in every way that was effective, by political superstition and by religious superstition. But the Revolution has risen again above the ruins of the Convention, of the Empire and of the Restoration. 1830 belongs in this chain, whose first link is 1789. 1789 had begun the reign of the bourgeosie; 1830 continued it.

Let us look now at the revolution of '93. How long did it last? What is left of it? Of what power, however, of what audacity, with what genius were not they endowed, whose task

it was to make it triumph. What a gigantic effort! What harrowing activity! What forces put into play from enthusiasm to terror! What instruments used in the service of these new doctrines from the sword of the general to the axe of the headsman! But the aim of the revolution for which the members of the convention should have worked out a program was not clearly defined at the start. Not one of the theories hastily advanced by Robespierre and Saint-Just have been elaborated in the heart of the nation. Jean-Jaques has indeed written his *Social Contract,* but how absolutely lost is the voice of one man in the great clamor with which the publicists of the bourgeoisie filled the eighteenth century? Thus the intellectual sterility of this heroic and prodigious intelligence of the Convention is explained. The men who composed it, could only destroy one another; because outside the sphere of their activity there was not that uncertainty and balancing of ideas which rule within. However, where nothing is decided by reason, all is determined by passion: and behold how into the same basket, have fallen successively the head of Danton upon that of Vergniaud, the head of Herbert upon that of Danton, and the head of Robespierre upon that of Herbert.

Let us recall these terrible struggles and let us meditate upon the lesson which they teach. Let us never lose sight of the means, nor the goal, and far from evading the discussion of social theories, let us provoke it whenever we have the opportunity in order not to be taken unawares and to know how to direct our forces when we have seized it.

But we shall evolve many false ideas, we preach many dreams. And what about it? Can man reach truth at the first step? And when he is plunged into darkness, shall we forbid his going towards the light, because in order to reach it he is forced to go through the shadow? And do you know whether humanity reaps any benefit from that which you call dreams? Do you know whether the dream of today will not be reality ten years hence? And if the truth can be realized in ten years, is it not necessary that we should take chances on the dreams of today? Any doctrine, whatever it may be, political, religious or social, is never developed without meeting more opponents than advocates, and it does not enlist any soldiers until many martyrs have been made. Have not all the ideas, which govern men, been esteemed follies before they were recognized as wise?

Who discoveres a new world?
A fool who is railled at everywhere.
On the Cross, wet with his blood,
Dies a fool, bequeathing to us a God.

Let us not blindly accept all what these volatile minds give us as so many oracles, let us seek truth with deliberation, with prudence, even with distrust; nothing more. But why shall we close the paths to the flights of the spirit? Every army, advancing in an unknown country, must have scouts, it is necessary that some of these should give false information. Alas! boldness of thought is not such a common thing today, that it must need cool enthusiasm and discourage effort.

What do you fear? That we inject false ideas into the popular mind upon the condition of the proletariat and on the means of bettering it. I answer, that if these ideas are false, the discussion carries them off as the wind blows the chaff from the grain. If it were otherwise, then progress would be a chimera and nothing would be left to us, but to wrap our head in our mantle.

What else do you fear? That the boldness of certain solutions of social questions shall trouble the hearts and injure the success of political reform? But in the first place, is it not a fact that the questions of universal suffrage, of the real sovereignty of the people, of the democratic government, do not frighten anyone in France? And what shall we do then, to prove to the fainthearted by good and quick reasons how puerile and vain their anxiety is?

Great God! that which frightens the political parties most is not so much what they say; as what they forget to say: The unknown! That is what frightens away the feeble souls. Will the democratic party be accused of pushing on to the point where it is an industrial Jacquerie, when it has scientifically developed the means to rid industry of a horrible disorder into which it has been lead astray? Will the bourgeosie, blinded by prejudice, rise when it shall have been proven that the ever-increasing concentration of capital menaces that class with the same yoke under which the laboring class is groaning.

Add to this, that, in order to give to the political reform numerous adherents among the people—the only means to render this reform prompt and decisive—it is absolutely indispensible to

show to the people the relation which exists between a change of the government and the ameleoration of its conditions, both material and moral. Let us be brave enough to say; this is what the democratic party has neglected up to the present and this, perhaps, has retarded its victory.

Discuss everything that is attached to the social reform, consider how to reach THE GOAL; work actively for the political reform as a MEANS to this end, this is the task imposed upon the defenders of the people. It is severe, but it is glorious: for it consists of the reign of justice after we have discovered truth and conquered resistance.

To arrive at a social revolution it is necessary to take its starting point in the conditions of present society. In other words, that which is important for us to find, is not so much a mathematical formula, as a practical solution.

Robert Owen was not a practical reformer, because he wanted to base the distribution of the products of labor on the needs of a society and not upon the services rendered.

The Saint-Simonists have not had any practical reformers because they have demanded the abolition of the family and the consequent destruction of the principle of inheritance.

Charles Fourier was not a practical reformer, because he laid the distribution of all labor, industrial or agricultural, at the mercy of the individual preference and because he has taken up everything in his social organization, except the idea of efficiency.

But what mighty ideas stir in all these works, especially in those of Fourier? Louis Reybaud, a laborious and intelligent writer—but full of enthusiasm and feeling—has just published a true and luminous statement of the theories expressed by these three audacious reformers. He has certainly rendered a great service in popularizing the ideas which were generally ignored or misunderstood. For the importance of the social sciences can not be contested today by anyone.

Let us see what remedy, in our opinion, will be possible. But at the outset we wish to advise the reader that we regard as merely provisional the social order, the basis of which we are about to indicate.

CONCLUSION.

HOW, ACCORDING TO OUR VIEW, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ORGANIZE.

The government ought to be considered as the supreme regulator of production and endowed for this duty with great power.

This task would consist of fighting competition and of finally overcoming it.

The government ought to float a loan with the proceeds of which it should erect *social workshops* in the most important branches of national industry.

As these establishments would demand considerable investments, the number of these workshops at the start ought to be carefully limited, still they would possess, by virtue of their organization—as we shall see later—an unlimited expansion.

The government, considered as the only founder of the workshops, must determine the status regulating them. This code, deliberated and voted for by the representatives of the people ought to have the power and force of a law.

All workmen who can give guarantee of morality shall be called to work in these social workshops up to the limit of the original capital gathered together for the purchase of tools.

As the false and anti-social education given to the present generation does not allow them to look farther for any greater recompense than a motive of emulation and encouragement, the difference in wages ought to be based on the scale of work done;[17] an entirely new form of education in this respect would completely change the ideas and customs. It is not necessary to say that the wages, in all cases, must be sufficient for the subsistence of the workman.

For the first years after the workshops are established, the government ought to regulate the scale of employment. After the first year it is no longer necessary, the laborers would then have time enough to truly estimate their respective work, and, all

17. Blanc did not demand equality of wages in the first edition; in the fifth edition he mentions it but by the ninth abandons the idea as too many had bitterly opposed it.

being equally interested as we will soon see, the success of the association would eventually depend on the elective principle.

Every year an account would be made of the net profit, which should be divided into three parts; one to be meted out equally to the members of the association, the other would be assigned, 1, for the maintenance of the aged, the sick and infirm; 2, for, meeting a crisis that oppresses other industries, in which case all industries must give help and succour; 3, the third part would be laid aside to furnish implements of work to those who may enter into the association later. In such a way it could be expanded indefinitely.

In every one of those associations for industries which permit a wholesale trade, those could be admitted which belong to those trades whose nature forces them to work apart and individually. Thus every workshop could be composed of different trades grouped about a greater industry obeying the same laws and partaking of the same privileges.

Every member of the social workshops would have the right to use, according to his discretion, the profits of his labor; but it would not be long before the evident economy and the incontestable excellence of this communal life would call forth other voluntary associations among the workmen according to their needs and pleasures.

Capitalists can also be taken into the association and would draw interest on their invested money, which would be guaranteed by the budget; but in the profits they would participate only if they were laborers at the same time.

If the social workshops were once established according to these principles, you could easily understand what the result would be. In every great industry, in machinery, for example, or the silk or cotton industry, or in printing establishments, the social workshops would be in competition with private industries. Would the fight be a long one? No, for the social workshops would have advantages over the others, the results of the cheaper communal life and through the organization by which all laborers, without exception, are interested in producing good and quick work. Would the fight be subversive? No, for the government would always endeavor to prevent the prices of the products of the social workshops from dropping to too low a level. If today an extremely rich man were to enter into a contest with another less wealthy, this unequal fight would be only disastrous, for the

private man looks only to his personal interest, if he can sell twice as cheap as his competitors, he will do so, in order to ruin them and be master of the situation. But when the power itself steps into the place of a private individual, the question develops a different phase.

The government of which we are speaking, has it any interest in upsetting industry and destroying its existence? Is it not rather by the virtue of its position the born protector even of those against whom, in its effort to transform society, it is waging a righteous competition? Therefore a comparison is not possible between the industrial war which the great capitalist today declares against the smaller capitalist, and the war which the government would declare in our system against an individual. The first necessarily consecrates fraud, violence and all evil which iniquity carries in its wake, the second would be conducted without brutality, without wreckage and in a manner to obtain only its aim: its peaceful and successive absorbtion of private workshops through social ones. In this manner instead of being, as every great capitalist is to-day, the master and tyrant of the market, the government would be its regulator. It would use competition as a weapon, not to destroy private industries without consideration, which would be to its own interest to avoid, but to guide them imperceptibly into the new system. Soon, indeed, workmen and capitalists would crowd to every industrial sphere where social workshops are opened, on account of the privileges they offer to their members. After a certain time we could see, how production takes place, without usurpation, without injustice, without irreparable disasters, and for the profit of the principle of association, a phenomena which is today so deplorably brought forth and only by force of tyranny for the profit of individual egotism. Today a rich manufacturer can strike a heavy blow at his rivals, leave them dead on the spot and monopolize a whole branch of industry; in our system, the State would constitute itself, by and by, as master of industry and in place of monopoly we have obtained, as the result of success, the subversion of competition: association.

Suppose that this aim is reached in any particular branch of industry; suppose that the manufacturers of machinery, for instance, place themselves at the service of the State, that means submit themselves to the principles of communal management. As one and the same industry is not always carried on in one

place but in different centers, it would be more just to introduce into all workshops, which belong to the same industry, the system of association. For, after having killed competition among individuals, it would be absurd to let it subsist among corporations. Therefore, in each sphere of work, which is placed under the dominion of the government, a central workshop must be established, to which all others would be in the position of supplementary workshops. Just as Rothchild possesses not only business houses in France, but in all different countries of the world, which correspond to the home office, in the same way each industry should have its central establishment and its affiliated branches. This would be the end of competition. The different centers of production would be bound together by the same common interest, and the ruinous hostility of effort would be replaced by their union.

I shall not dwell upon the simplicity of this mechanism; it is evident. We see indeed, that after the first year each workshop would be able to stand on its own feet and the State would restrict itself to superintending the maintenance of relations between all centers embracing the same kind of production and hindering the violation of the principles of the common order. Every kind of public service today presents a hundred fold more complications. Think for a moment of the conditions, under which everybody would be permitted to take upon himself the transportation of letters and the government should step in declaring: "To me alone belongs the mail service." How many objections would be raised then? How shall the government undertake to transmit exactly to the minute, all that 34 million people can write every day and every hour, to other 34 million people? And with what admirable exactness is the service in the post-offices carried on! Nevertheless, not counting certain little shortcomings, which have their reason not as much in the nature of the mechanism as in the poor condition of the Government, under which we have lived to the present time we know with what marvellous precision the postal service has been carried on. I do not speak of our administration and the regularity of the workings of this immense machine! Indeed, the way the divisions and subdivisions work, lead us to the idea that this apparently complicated mechanism moves automatically. Why should it be impossible for the laborers to act together, in a country where twenty years ago, we saw one man animate ten million people at his will, infuse his life into them and

make them follow in his foot-steps? It is true that his work was destructive. But is it in the nature of things, in the will of God, in the decrees of fate, that to produce in common should be impossible, while to destroy in common seems to be so easy? At last, I repeat it, the State with its immense resources of every kind, should perform that, which we see accomplished daily by each single individual.

From the common interest of all the laborers in the same workshop we infer the common interest of all workshops in the same industry. In order to complete the system, we must establish the solidarity of the various industries. Therefore, from the profit yielded by each industry, we must set aside a sum by means of which the State could give aid to every industry, which has suffered through extraordinary and unforseen circumstances. Besides, in the system which we propose, crises would become rare. What causes them most frequently to-day? The veritable murderous contest between the interests, a contest from which no victor can come forth without leaving conquered ones on the field of battle; a combat, that like all wars, chains slaves to the chariot of the victor. In destroying competition we strangle at the same time the evils which it brings forth. No more victories and no more defeats! Then crises can only be caused from the outside. It would only be necessary to ward them off. The treaties of peace and of alliance would, doubtlessly, be insufficient; but how many disasters could be averted, if in place of this despicable diplomacy, this fight of hypocrisy, falsehood and baseness, which divides nations amongst a group of successful brigands, we substitute a system of alliance, based on the needs of industry and the reciprocal demands of laborers in all parts of the world. But mark well, this new kind of diplomacy will be impracticable, so long as the industrial anarchy, which threatens to devour us reigns. In the courts of inquiry, which have been established for several years, only too much of this has already been made public. What unfortunate spectacles have we witnessed? Have not these courts of inquiry shown us the peasant waging war against the manufacturer of beet-sugar, the mechanic against the blacksmith, the harbor against factories in the interior, Bordeaux against Paris, the South against the North, all who produce against all consumers? What can the government accomplish in the face of such a monstrous disorder? What some demand in haste, others hurl back furiously; what enlivens one, kills another. It is clear,

that this absence of solidarity among interests, robs the State of all possibility of being precautious and enchains it in all relations to the foreign powers. Soldiers on the outside, police on the inside; the present State has no means of action and its whole activity is necessarily limited in checking destruction on one hand and in exercising it on the other. The State should place itself resolutely at the head of industry by rallying around one principle all those forces, all those interests, which to-day struggle against each other, then its external activity will be more prudent, more fertile, more fortunate and more decisive! Thus the reorganization of labor will not only obviate crisis, which originate in our midst, but also, most of those which the wind that blows the sail of our ships, conveys to us from outside!

Is it necessary that I should continue to enumerate the advantages which the new system brings about? In the industrial world in which we live, all the discoveries of science are a calamity, first because the machines supplant the laborers who need work to live, and then, because they are also murderous weapons, furnished to industry which has the right and faculty to use them against all those who have not this right and power. What does *"new machines"* mean in the system of competition? It means monopoly; we have proven it. However, in the new system of association and solidarity there are no patents for inventors, no individual exploitation. The inventor will be recompensed by the State and his discovery is then placed at the service of all. What is to-day a means of extermination, becomes an instrument of universal progress; what to-day reduces the laborer to hunger, to despair and drives him to revolt will serve only to render his task lighter and to produce a sufficient leisure to live a life of intelligence and happiness, in one word, that which has tolerated tyranny will aid in the triumph of fraternity.

In the inconceivable confusion, into which we are plunged to-day, commerce does not and can not depend on production. Production is forced to find among consumers all those producers who are striving to wrest consumers from each other, just as the brokers and curbstone-brokers, the great merchants and the small merchants do. Commerce thus becomes the open sore of production. Placed between the laborer who works and him who consumes, commerce rules the one as well as the others. Fourier, who through his vigorous attack on the present economic order and after him his pupil, Victor Considerant, have, with an irresist-

ible logic, laid bare the great open wound of society, which we call commerce. The merchant ought to be the agent of production, sharing equally in its benefits and chances. That is what reason tells us and what universal utility imperiously demands. In this system which we propose, nothing is easier to realize. All hostilities ceasing between the various centers of production, within a given industry, there will be, here and there, as to-day in the greater commercial houses, branch stores to meet the demand of consumption.

What place has credit in this system? To furnish tools to the laborer. Today credit is, as we have already proven, something quite different.[18] Banks do not loan except to the rich. Even if they would loan to the poor, they could not do it without ruining themselves. The banks, established only from the viewpoint of individualism, could not be anything else than an admirably conceived means to make the rich wealthier and the mighty more powerful. Everywhere monopoly under the guise of freedom, everywhere tyranny under the appearance of progress! The proposed organization would make short process with such crimes. That part of the profit which is especially and invariably laid aside for the increase of the social workshops through recruitment of laborers, this furnishes the means of credit. Of what need would banks be now? Suppress them.

Would an excess of population be feared if an income would be assured to every laborer who would necessarily adapt himself to the idea of order and the habits of prudence? Why is misery to-day more prolific than wealth? We have given the reasons.

In a system where every sphere of industry would gather together a certain number of men animated by the same spirit, acting under the same impulse, having common hopes, common interests, where would be the place, I ask you, for these adulteration of products, these cowardly subterfuges, these daily ties, these subtle frauds which to-day compel each producer, every merchant, cost what it may, to take away from his neighbor his customers and his fortune? Industrial reform would in this way mean a profound moral revolution and would bring about in one day more convertions than all sermons of preachers and all speeches of moralists could in a century.

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18. Author's Note—See the article entitled *Question des Banques*, in the Revue du Progres of Dec. 1, 1839.

What we have just said of the industrial reform will suffice to show according to what fundamental principles and bases the agricultural reform has been working. The abuse of collateral succession is universally recognized. These successions should be abolished and the property represented by them should be made communal property. Each community will in this way build up a domain which will be inalienable and, not being capable of being extended, will bring about without division and usurpation a great agricultural revolution. The exploitation of the communal domain, however, will take place necessarily on a much larger scale and in accordance with these laws which regulate industry. We return to this subject which demands further development.

We have seen why the education of the children of the people is impossible under the present system. In our system it would be possible in such a way that we could make it obligatory and gratuitous at the same time. If the means for subsistance of each laborer were assured and his wages were sufficient, what right would he have to refuse to send his children to school? There are serious men who think that it is dangerous to-day to spread learning throughout the ranks of the people, and they are right. But do they not see that this danger of education is an overwhelming proof of the absurdity of our social order? Everything is wrong in these conditions: work is no honor, the most useful employments are disdained; a laborer is more or less an object of compassion, while they have not flowers enough for a ballet dancer. This is why the education of the people is a danger. This is why our colleges and our schools only throw upon our society ambitious, discontended men and boasters. But let us help the people read good books; let us teach them that the most useful is also the most honorable; that there are only arts in society, no trades; that nothing deserves contempt, except that which corrupts the soul and infuses it with the poison of pride, holding aloof from it the practice of fraternity and inculcating egotism. Then let us show these children that society is governed by the principles that are taught them: would education be dangerou then? They make a foot-stool of education for all apparently foolish vanities, for all barren pretensions and then fling an anathema against instruction. They write bad books based on bad examples and they believe themselves sufficiently authorized to forbid reading! What a pity!

Let us sum up the whole. An economic revolution must be attempted:

1—because the present social conditions are too full of misery, iniquity and turpitude, to last much longer.

2—because everybody, irrespective of position, rank or fortune, is interested in the creation of a new social order.

3—finally because it is possible, even easy, to produce this necessary revolution in a peaceful way.

In the new world into which we could enter, some things, perhaps, must be accomplished for the complete realization of the principle of fraternity. But at least all would be prepared for this realization, which would be the work of education. Humanity has been too far separated from its goal to reach it in one day. The corrupt civilization, under the yoke of which we still groan, has disturbed all interests, but at the same time it has lost all reason and has poisoned all springs of human intelligence. Iniquity has taken the place of justice, falsehood has become truth and men tear each other to pieces under the protection of darkness.

Many false ideas must be destroyed; doubtlessly we can count upon their disappearing. The day will come, when we will acknowledge that he, whom God has endowed with more strength, or greater intelligence, must do more for his fellow men. Then let genius, and it is fully worthy of it, exercise its legitimate power, not by means of the tribute which it levies upon society, but by the grandeur of the services which it will render to society. For the inequality of capabilities has for its goal, not the inequalities of rights, but the inequalities of duties.